MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

27 JULY 1982

Lebanon

Military Situation -- Israeli forces mounted repeated air and sea attacks on targets in west Beirut and the southern suburbs on 26 July, according to Beirut and Voice of Lebanon radio reports. Israeli planes hit a number of Palestinian tanks, artillery positions and an ammunition dump, Voice of Lebanon reported. According to IDF radio, an Israeli military source denied that IDF soldiers attempted to land on the shore at west Beirut, and the IDF spokesman confirmed to the radio in another report that the Israeli Navy shelled Palestinian targets in the city.

The clandestine Voice of Palestine radio claimed that Israeli shelling caused 101 casualties from late 25 to 26 July. The Voice of Lebanon noted that Israeli and Palestinian shellfire again erupted early 27 July.

An Israeli position in western Al-Biqa' was destroyed by Joint Forces on 24-25 July, a statement by the Palestinian-Lebanese Joint Forces spokesman carried by Voice of Palestine radio claimed. Meanwhile, AFP reported that the Israeli army advanced 10 km up the valley, occupied three villages and reinforced its lines with tanks and radar.

Israel has the answer to the SAM-8's deployed by the Syrians, Israeli Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon told the Knesset Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee, according to MA'ARIV.

PLO Operations Room Commander Sa'd Sayil said a battle for Beirut is now inevitable, the Voice of Lebanon reported.

PLO Position, Reaction -- Confirming that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat told the visiting U.S. delegation that the PLO abides by all UN resolutions pertaining to the Palestinian cause, the Voice of Palestine observed that this declaration has provoked extensive media coverage and been subject to various interpretations. Meanwhile, 'Arafat contacted PLO offices throughout the world to point out that the Palestine National Council has already approved these UN resolutions, Beirut radio reported. None of the main PLO leaders in west Beirut has yet criticized 'Arafat's initiative, the radio said. In Damascus, Palestine National Council Speaker Khalid al-Fahum said the PLO accepts "all the UN resolutions adopted since 1947", according to KUNA. Security Council Resolution 242 "had been rejected" because it views the Palestinian crisis as a refugee problem and not a problem of self-determination, he stated. Citing a PLO official in Beirut, KUNA also reported that the document signed by 'Arafat indicates that the PLO will accept an amended version of 242 that not only recognizes Israel's right to exist, but also guarantees Palestinian rights to statehood and self-determination. U.S. Congressman Paul McCloskey said he had been told by 'Arafat that the document includes 242 "if it is taken with other resolutions," KUNA added.

The director of the PLO's Tehran office said the document has absolutely nothing to do with official recognition of Israel, according to Tehran radio. Meanwhile, JANA accused the "reactionary Palestinian rightwing" of "intensifying suspicious moves with the reactionary Arab regimes and the Zionist enemy." A Kuwaiti spokesman announced that Kuwait will support any decision adopted by the PLO that helps the Palestinians regain their rights and their land, according to KUNA. Amman radio said the document signed by 'Arafat constitutes "one of our most important turning points" and the United States can no longer officially avoid negotiating with the PLO.

Habib Mission, Destination of Palestinians -- U.S. envoy Philip Habib met in London with Jordanian King Husayn, who stressed the need for a complete and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, Amman radio reported. In a related report, Monte Carlo radio said Husayn rejected proposals that Jordan receive all or some of the PLO fighters from Lebanon. In Lebanon the Islamic Salvation Front of Tripoli categorically rejected a proposal for the transfer of the PLO fighters from Beirut to Tripoli, according to Beirut radio. On the other hand, Sudanese President Ja'far Numayri announced that Sudan is ready to welcome the Palestinian fighters from Lebanon, SUNA reported.

Egyptian Message to U.S. -- During his forthcoming visit to Washington, Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali will deliver a message to President Ronald Reagan stressing that the Lebanese crisis must be studied in the light of the latest developments in the PLO position, MENA reported.

Israeli Position -- 'Arafat's "publicity stunt" will not help the "terrorists," and the only burning issue today is that Israel wants the PLO out of Beirut and Lebanon, an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman said in remarks reported by Jerusalem radio. Earlier, Foreign Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said the air force pressure on west Beirut is aimed at forcing the PLO to leave, DAVAR reported. A senior Israeli official said that if the PLO withdraws from Beirut via the Al-Biqa' Valley, Israel might permit some PLO fighters to remain in Al-Biqa' for a limited time, THE JERUSALEM POST reported.

Egypt

Israel should recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the PLO should recognize Israel's right to exist, President Husni Mubarak said in a speech at the National Democratic Party Headquarters broadcast by Cairo radio. Asserting that the Israelis are mistaken to suppose they can eliminate the Palestinian people and cause through military operations, Mubarak said the Israelis must withdraw immediately. Regarding proposals that Egypt receive the PLO command and fighters, he said the solution does not lie in removing the PLO's command from Lebanon. Mubarak also voiced strong opposition to attempts to impose the hegemony of one group over all others in Lebanon and denounced the Israeli suggestion that Jordan be transformed into a Palestinian state. Criticizing the Iranian invasion of Iraq, Mubarak called on the superpowers to declare their stand on the issue.

Regarding Egypt's internal affairs, he said security is assured but drew attention to the country's economic problems. After detailing the budgetary problems caused by price subsidies and noting the economic conference's recommendation that the subsidies should be reduced, he nevertheless promised not to lift them.

Iran-Iraq War

Fighting continued in the Basra sector of Iraq; Iraq pounded enemy positions, killing 5 Iranians, and Iranian artillery hit residential areas of Basra, killing 6 and wounding 22, an Iraqi military communique carried by INA reported. An Iranian Armed Forces communique carried by Tehran radio confirmed that heavy fighting took place on the southern fronts and noted that Iraqi artillery continued to hit Abadan.

Commanders of the Iranian Ground Forces and revolution guards said the Ramadan Operation is taking longer than previous operations because Iran planned to do the greatest amount of damage to Iraqi military forces without hitting Iraqi cities and civilians, Tehran radio reported. The commander of the ground forces claimed the Iraqis have so far lost 5,000 troops, 650 tanks and personnel carriers, with 1,159 soldiers and 101 tanks captured. He aided that Iran controls 150 square km of Iraqi territory.

Algerian Mediation -- Regarding the Algerian offer for mediation in the war, Iranian Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi told a Cabinet meeting that Iran welcomes any effort aimed at fulfilling its conditions for ending the war, Tehran radio reported. He stressed that the Iraqi forces must withdraw unconditionally to "areas from which they started the war."

Khamene'i Speech -- Iranian President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i reiterated in a speech to military commanders carried by Tehran radio that Iran poses no threat to neighboring Gulf states, and that Iranian "victories" are cutting superpower access to the Gulf region and guaranteeing the independence of the region. He said the main conditions for ending the war are that the "aggressor" is punished and that war reparations are paid.

Kuwait on Alert -- Kuwait has declared a state of alert for army units on the border with Iraq as a precaution against further Gulf war developments, according to the London paper ASH-SHARQ AL-AWSAT.

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ARMED FORCES CHIEF EXTOLS MILITARY SERVICE

LD262030 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Statement by Maj Gen Baba Jan, chief of General Staff of the DRA Armed Forces, addressed to soldiers and officers of the armed forces "to help coordinate further the ranks of these guardians of the revolution" -- live or recorded]

[Text] Dear noble compatriots: Since the beginning of the victory of the glorious April Revolution, relying on the powerful strength of the millions-strong toiling masses of the country, the DRA Armed Forces have courageously and bravely defended the revolution and its gains and have exterminated great strongholds of the [words indistinct] rebels. Their self-sacrifice and courage have been responsible for the cleansing of our sacred homeland from the existence of these agents of reaction and thugs. [5-second break in transmission] in the service of the toilers, who are (?deprived) of the April Revolution, national independence and the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country.

The revolutionary process in our proud homeland [word indistinct] that the powerful armed forces of our country have been able to carry out with complete success their obligations and duties to the people, the revolution and the homeland. Heroism, self-sacrifice and militancy characterize the personnel of the DRA Armed Forces, and the heroic troops of our armed forces have accomplished deeds in the struggle against our class enemies that have added pride to the rich honor of our people.

The bands of counterrevolutionaries, supported by international imperialism, headed by U.S. and Chinese hegemonism, embark on murder, plunder, looting, and the destruction of public utilities. They are disrupting the peaceful life of our noble and toiling people and, by resorting to inhuman and savage actions, they want to slow down the process of the development of the revolution. But these reactionary forces cannot stop the trend of the society's development.

To implement the lofty aims of the April Revolution, which have been categorically explained in the PDPA action program, it is necessary first of all to maintain lasting, complete and all-round peace throughout the country. The PDPA and the DRA Government pay great attention to affairs concerning the all-round consolidation of the DRA Armed Forces and to the enhancement of their combatreadiness and capability. They put special emphasis on the transformation of the armed forces into a reliable (?source) for the defense of revolution and its gains and into loyal and true servants of our noble and toiling people.

Under the present conditions, every loyal and patriotic citizen of our homeland and the courageous youths must be prepared to serve in the armed forces and still further strengthen and consolidate the ranks of these reliable guardians of the revolution, and by joining in the ranks of our heroic armed forces carry out their revolutionary and national duty to our persecuted and oppressed compatriots.

Service in the militant ranks of the DRA Armed Forces is an honor for every noble citizen of Afghanistan. The (?toilers) of the independent, proud and free Afghanistan, by serving in the armed forces, show themselves to be true (?defenders) against their class enemies, because it is seen that the courageous people of the DRA are fighting courageously against the blood-devouring agents of U.S. imperialism and its collaborators in order to build a prosperous society. On this path they do not spare any sacrifice and they stay loyal to their last breath.

Our revolution has been earned with a very high price [brief interruption in transmission] and do not let the defeated counterrevolutionary enemies and their supporters extend their unclean hands to our sacred land or disrupt the peaceful life of our compatriots.

Defending the gains of the revolution is a very important and sacred duty of every one of our compatriots. The courageous and conscientious troops of the DRA Armed Forces are a force of which all toilers of our country are proud, because their heroic personnel have stood up against the treacherous and bestial actions of terrorists and professional saboteurs, those enemies of peace, freedom and equality and because they are defending their sacred homeland, their honor, their sisters, brothers, fathers and mothers, and crushing the soldout mercenary enemies under their heavy and fatal blows.

It is the supreme duty of each compatriot, as a person loving his homeland and as a patriot, to stand in the ranks of the powerful armed forces in the fight against counter-revolution and to create, with self-sacrifice and courage, an atmosphere suitable for an honorable life for themselves and our compatriots, who are suffering because of the oppression and tyrannies of counterrevolutionary rebels and who have sustained various pains and sufferings. Service in the armed forces is the sacred duty of every individual in Afghanistan. This is the [word indistinct] of patriotism and manhood. One should learn from this, and the struggle to serve the toiling mankind and patriotism must be learned with this as its nucleus. The path which the PDPA has chosen for building a new society must be courageously followed and defended.

In order to strengthen themselves our armed forces need new and experienced personnel. The strengthening of this revolutionary force, by the joining of youths in its militant ranks, needs the sincere implementation of the sacred tasks of defending the revolutionary gains [words indistinct] against the counterrevolutionaries. The conscientious and patriotic youths of our homeland ought to be deeply aware and realize that revolutionary conditions demand that they put their able hands at the service of the defense of the homeland in a lofty spirit of patriotism. Service in the DRA Armed Forces is an honor, because the DRA Armed Forces, which have been organized with the victory of the revolution, are working and active. They are at the service of the millions-strong masses. They are the army of toilers and a liberating army.

Let us, by building up still further the DRA Armed Forces and by taking an active part in the process of crushing the class enemies of the toilers of our country, create suitable conditions for building a new society based on social justice, democracy and progress.

The (?present process) in our revolutionary country and historical experiences show that victory is ours and victory is for the toiling masses of the country under the leadership of the PDPA.

Let the DRA Armed Forces be strong! Victory to the glorious April Revolution! Long live the PDPA!

AFP REPORTS REBELS SUFFER HEAVY LOSSES

BK230735 Hong Kong AFP in English 0658 GMT 23 Jul 82

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Text] New Delhi, July 23 (AFP) -- Moslem insurgents in Afghanistan are on the run in seven of the country's 12 "military zones" following a government offensive throughout the Moslem fasting month of Ramadan which has just ended, Asian diplomatic reports said today.

The insurgents, fighting the Soviet-backed regime of Babrak Karmal, suffered heavy losses in clashes with government troops backed by Soviet aircraft and tanks. Large quantities of arms and ammunition, including sophisticated anti-tank weaponry were recovered from the rebel strongholds.

The reports, based on eyewitness accounts, government and rebel claims and independent assessments of the sutuation by diplomats, said over 200 rebels had been killed and another 600 to 700 captured during the month-long operation.

The offensive was suspended for a few days starting today because of the celebrations marking the end of Ramadan, the reports said.

Western diplomats who monitor developments in Afghanistan admitted the government success, but disagreed with their Asian counterparts' assessments of rebel losses.

They also expressed doubts that the government troops would be able to hold out for long.

Early last year, the Soviet military command in Afghanistan divided the country into 12 "military zones" in a bid to effectively counter the growing uprising.

The four-pronged government offensive, considered to be the most effective and well-planned since the Soviet armed intervention in December 1979, was launched in the strategic Panjsher Valley, 100 kms (60 miles) north of Kabul.

It touched the Paghman mountain range 20 kms (12 miles) north-west of the Afghan capital, the city of Charikar, the western Province of Herat and the northern provinces bordering the Soviet Union.

For the first time since the Soviet intervention, government troops now control the former royal summer resort of Paghman. Earlier offensives, including one last year, failed to dislodge the rebels from this strategic mountain range, which is linked to Kabul by two good roads, the reports said.

Part of the Panjsher Valley, considered the strongest rebel stronghold, is now under government control, the reports added.

For the first time, the government-owned newspaper KABUL NEW TIMES published photographs of "liberated" Panjsher and Paghman. Western diplomats here earlier this week admitted the government success in Paghman, but refused to accept government claims that the entire Panjsher Valley was under control.

The reports added, however, that although the rebels were still entrenched in the Panjsher Valley, their "backbone had been broken."

The Soviet-Afghan military command in Kabul is apparently trying to consolidate positions to launch another, perhaps bigger, offensive before the Afghan winter sets in, the reports said.

The offensive also cleared all rebel strongholds in and around the road connecting Kabul with the Soviet port town of Tirmiz, they said. The road has gained strategic importance after the inauguration earlier this year of the bridge over the Amu Darya (Oxus) River.

The reports estimated Afghan-Soviet losses at 200 to 400 dead or missing, adding that at least five to eight helicopters were lost during the operation. They did not mention the losses suffered by the Soviet armoured forces [sent] to the Panjsher Valley to face the first rebel counter-attack.

The Soviet military presence in Afghanistan has been steadily increasing and its total fighting strength is now estimated by the reports at between 120,000 and 135,000 men.

The reports estimated the rebels' fighting strength at between 45,000 and 70,000 men scattered around the country, but said this was a disadvantage because they were forced to face Soviet-Afghan forces concentrated in specific areas.

The reports also said that over the past six months, an estimated 4,000 refugee families had returned to Afghanistan.

GANDHI LEAVES FOR U.S.; PRESS COMMENTS ON TRIP

BK270553 Hong Kong AFP in English 0511 GMT 27 Jul 82

[Text] New Delhi, July 27 (AFP) -- Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today scotched reports that she would discuss India's defence needs with the United States during her nine-day official U.S. visit, the first by an Indian premier in 11 years.

"I am not going to discuss defence matters.... that is for the Defence Department to consider," Mrs. Gandhi told newsmen before boarding a plane for New York.

Indian newspapers had carried reports from Washington, quoting senior Reagan administration officials, that the U.S. was willing to sell India defence equipment, including the sophisticated F-16 aircraft.

Mrs. Gandhi last visited the United States in 1971, the year India fought a war with Pakistan that saw the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation. She was accompanied on the current trip by her only surviving son, Rajiv Gandhi, his Italian-born wife Sona and their children.

Mrs. Gandhi, who looked cheerful, waved at the assembled dignitaries and members of the diplomatic corps before boarding the Air India Boeing "Lhotse."

Mrs. Gandhi is scheduled to have three hours of talks with U.S. President Ronald Reagan in Washington on Thursday.

Meanwhile, leading New Delhi newspapers carried editorials and reports on Mrs. Gandhi's visit.

"India not keen on buying F-16 now," said the independent HINDUSTAN TIMES on its front page.

"The Reagan administration's willingness to consider the sale of F-16 combat aircraft to India could well be aimed at taking the edge off India's protest over the gift of the planes to Pakistan," the TIMES said.

"Setting out on her official visit to the U.S., Mrs. Gandhi's mission is principally to clear fundamental perceptions of each other and create an ambiance so that matters of bilateral concern can be sorted out later with greater measure of agreement," the newspaper said.

The opposition newspaper INDIAN EXPRESS said: "A better understanding of one another's position rather than any dramatic change in Indo-U.S. relations is what might be expected from Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Washington."

"Both sides are likely to remove misunderstandings and create a more favourable climate for the future.... Mrs. Gandhi will no doubt seek to dispel the lingering American belief that India leans towards the Soviet Union," the paper said.

Commenting on the prospects of improving trade relations between India and the United States, the EXPRESS noted the recent liberalisation of certain Indian foreign-economic regulations.

"Greater economic and technological Indo-American exchanges could be an incidental, though useful, fallout arising from the interest generated in the U.S. by Mrs. Gandhi's visit," the EXPRESS said.

The United States continues to be India's major trade partner, with a two-way turnover of over 23,620 million rupees (about $1,500 million) during 1980-81.

The independent TIMES OF INDIA, commenting on the U.S. offer of arms to India, said the issue should be dealt with cautiously.

"The U.S. administration had convinced itself that India leans towards the Soviet Union primarily because it depends on Moscow for arms," the newspaper said. "Since Washington is keen to weaken this relationship and thereby increase the Soviet Union's isolation in Asia, it (the U.S.) may well be willing to incur Pakistani displeasure."

"Indeed a new situation has arisen and New Delhi shall have to deal with it carefully.... This will be especially so if Mrs. Gandhi's visit is successful," the TIMES said.

"An improvement in what the Americans call the atmospherics will accentuate rather than diminish India's dilemma as far as the arms issue is considered," the newspaper said.

COMMENTATOR SPECULATES ON GANDHI U.S. TALKS

BK261455 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1340 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Commentary by C.S. Pandit of AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA]

[Text] It is exactly after 11 years that Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi is visiting the United States on an official visit. She leaves on her 8-day tour on Tuesday [27 July] on an invitation from President Reagan after they had a very fruitful meeting at the Cancun summit. Until then, presumably President Reagan had been given the impression that Indian's prime minister was a difficult person to deal with. The Cancun meeting, the first ever between the two leaders, apparently wiped out that impression. As reports from Cancun said at the time, for the first time India's prime minister was able to charm the U.S. President by her sincerity and genuineness.

This was remarkable for the simple reason that her last visit to the United States in 1971 during Nixon's time was a disaster and ever since the India-American relations had been rather formal, verging on studied coldness on both sides. During the brief Janata rule, an attempt was made to defreeze these relations but neither the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai's visit to Washington nor President Carter's return visit to New Delhi helped to improve matters because of various reasons, mainly being the low priority India had in the global strategy of the United States and India's insistence on an independent stand on international issues.

Even now there is no change in the posture of the two countries. And in that sense nothing spectacular was likely to emerge from the talks Mrs Gandhi is due to have with President Reagan on Thursday next. However, after the rapport established between the two at Cancun, it is reasonable to hope that they would try to understand each other's compulsions and appreciate them. Once that happens a normal working relationship may be possible between the two countries.

India would like the primary focus during these talks to be on some important international economic and political issues. Mrs Gandhi had brought them up at Cancun itself. Then followed the exchange of letters between the leaders specifically on these issues. The three main economic issues Mrs Gandhi is likely to raise relate to dwindling prospects of multilateral aid, with the United States dragging its feet on the replenishment of International Development Agency funds and the need for multilateral financing of energy development, including exploration and development of oil, coal and other sources either through a World Bank affiliate or, as the (?Arabs) wanted, through some other independent international agency. The third in this category relates to trade restrictions imposed by the developed countries on Third World manufacturers and semimanufacturers like textiles, garments, industrial fasteners and other engineering goods. And finally, Mrs Gandhi would also like to emphasize that international financial institutions should not be used as instruments to advance political interests of those controlling them.

Among the international political issues that are likely to be raised at the talks are Afghanistan, the West Asian situation, India-Pakistan relations and the situation in the Indian Ocean. It is unlikely that Kampuchea or China would figure in the talks except only indirectly. While the United States is bound to raise the Afghan issue in the context of India-Soviet relations, India on its part would be equally interested in stressing the need for a political solution through peaceful negotiations instead of military confrontation.

And in that context India would like to point out that the United States, by its decision to supply massive arms to Pakistan in the name of a threat posed by the presence of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan, was in fact creating a Pakistan problem for India. This necessarily results in a lot of economic destabilization of our country because of the diversion of huge resources from development to defense. While India does not expect the United States to resile from its military aid commitment to Pakistan, at least it hopes these exchanges would prevent further bolstering of the Pakistan military regime.

The prime minister is not expected to take up any specific bilateral issue at these talks. Of course, at the official level there would be discussion on all such matters, including the resumption of supplies of enriched uranium fuel for Tarapur under the 1963 contract. These supplies have remained suspended since Reagan assumed office. In case nothing comes out of these official-level talks, Mrs Gandhi may like to raise this particular issue with the President himself because this issue has soured relations between the two countries. Both sides feel that the objective conditions obtaining today are such that this visit could lead to a more normal and healthy relationship between the two countries. That has not been the case for the past over a decade.

STOESSEL REMARKS ON F-16, TARAPUR FUEL NOTED

BK231435 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 23 Jul 82

[Text] American Deputy Secretary of State Walter Stoessel has expressed the United States readiness to sell military equipment, including F-16 aircraft, to India. He was speaking to the Indian press in Washington yesterday. Stoessel, however, made it clear that the Reagan administration's plan to carry through its program of military assistance to Pakistan will continue.

In reply to a question on nuclear fuel supply for the Tarapur plant, Stoessel said it is not a closed issue.

He commended India's policy of nonalignment and said: India is truly nonaligned and we respect her position in the Nonaligned Movement.

CURFEW IMPOSED IN DELHI FOLLOWING CLASHES

BK261600 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Text] Curfew was imposed in a part of the walled city of Delhi this afternoon following clashes between two groups of people. Additional Police Commissioner M.K. Singhal told the All-India Radio correspondent that the curfew imposed at 1430 this afternoon will remain in force [until] 0800 tomorrow morning. Singhal said the police used teargas and later resorted to firing to control the situation. Ten policemen were injured in the incident. Forty-one people have so far been arrested. He said the police are patrolling the area and the situation is now under control.

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs P. Venkatsubbaiah, announced in the Lok Sabha that a magisterial inquiry has been ordered into the police firing. He said one person was killed in the firing.

KHAMENE'I SPEAKS ON U.S. 'PLOTS,' GULF SECURITY

LD262002 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Speech by President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i given on 26 July to a group of commanders from the ground forces' training centers -- read by announcer]

[Excerpts] Warning of American plots in the region, the president said: By frightening the countries in the region of the Islamic Republic of Iran, America initially intends to disrupt our friendship with those countries and then intends to establish its military presence in the region. He stressed: America also pretends that the victories of the combatants of Islam have threatened the interests of the countries in the region. This is not so; our victories are a direct threat to America's interests.

He added: The Islamic Republic of Iran poses no danger to the countries in the region. However, if Iraq had won, the peace of the region would have been threatened. This is because Iraq's aggression against Iran proves that it wants expansion and dissension in the region. Also, Iraq's victory would have paved the superpowers' way into the region.

Stressing the point that the security of the Persian Gulf should be safeguarded by members of the same family, he said: Today, not only are our victories not threatening the security of the Persian Gulf countries, but they are cutting short the superpowers' access to and guarantee the independence of the countries in the region. We seriously believe and are in favor of the independence of these countries; we will not allow enemies and aggressors to enter the region.

He said: The resistance of the Muslim nation of Iran combined with the weakness and [word indistinct] of the superpowers, their great problems and the complexity of world issues, will not allow the superpowers to effect direct military interference. However, it does not prevent them from political -- mixed with military -- plots. He said: America wants to use its extensive propaganda to prevent the progress and strengthening of the Islamic revolution. These plots have become more extensive since the superpowers lost hope in Saddam's regime and since our combatants' wondrous victories.

He said: Those who think of Iran's demands that Saddam be condemned and that the Ba'th Party be destroyed as interference in Iraq's internal affairs are mistaken. We will never interfere in Iraq's internal affairs, because we believe that Iraq's internal destiny should be determined by the people of that country.

Reiterating the conditions that the Islamic Republic of Iran recently announced, especially that the aggressor be punished and war reparations be paid, the president said that he regards them as the main conditions for ending the war. He said: We shall not stop at demanding the payment of damages, but we say that those who resort to force should be destroyed. [sentence as heard]

Referring to the Zionists' aggression against southern Lebanon, he said: The superpowers intended to destroy the Islamic revolution by creating the issue of Iraq in the Persian Gulf; the Zionists' and America's policy in creating the issue of Lebanon is that by creating a government affiliated with America -- one which might pave the way for the Camp David accord -- they could disarm the great Palestinian Revolution, which is a great threat to them, and turn it into a political [words indistinct].

Referring to countries such as Egypt and Iraq, which have invited Palestinian warriors to live in their countries, he said: Those who have invited the Palestinians to their countries to keep them away from the frontline of struggle against Zionism, are doing the biggest of favors for the Americans and the shameless Zionists. He said: In our view, the plot to establish a government in Lebanon that is subservient to America and Zionism would be as dangerous and regrettable for the world of Islam and the Middle East as would be the catastrophe of the destruction of the Palestinian Revolution and the Muslims of southern Lebanon.

WAR, ALGERIAN PEACE EFFORTS DISCUSSED BY CABINET

LD261200 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, which has just been handed to us, the Cabinet of the Islamic Republic of Iran met today with Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi in the chair. During the session, the most important developments in the country were discussed and reviewed.

Later the minister of defense reported on the situation at the battlefronts. The minister of defense also described the recent attack by the brave Islamic combatants and their penetration of the Ba'thist-Zionist enemy's defenses, as a result of which heavy losses and casualties were inflicted on enemy personnel.

After this, Foreign Minister Velayati reported on the latest developments in the Middle East.

Then Mr Musavi informed the Cabinet about his meeting with the imam of the nation and reported on his recent visit to Algeria and Libya. The prime minister expressed the hope that his visit would help the further advancement of Middle East and North African nations. The prime minister said that during the visit the need for more practical assistance to the oppressed Palestinian and Lebanese nations was stressed.

Regarding claims by foreign agencies that Iran would accept the 1975 [Algiers] agreement as a basis for ending the war, the prime minister said what is important to us, and we have often stated it, is the unconditional withdrawal of the aggressive Saddamist forces to the areas from which they started the war.

The prime minister added: Saddam has frequently unilaterally abrogated the 1975 agreement. We have not taken a position in this matter. [sentence as heard] What interests us, however, has nothing to do with this or that agreement. What we have in mind is the enemy's withdrawal to their preaggression locations.

With regard to the Algerian Government's efforts for peace, the prime minister added: The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as has been declared previously, will welcome any effort aimed at fulfilling its declared conditions.

At this point, Interior Minister Nateq-Nuri reported the result of his investigation into the problems of Esfahan Province. His views on the need to further strengthen revolutionary institutions and government agencies were supported by the Cabinet.

Also at this meeting, the governor general of Tehran informed the Cabinet about the province's political status and its most important problems. He proposed a plan to increase the province's development allocations. Certain decisions in this regard were adopted.

At the end of the Cabinet session today, a number of urgent decrees were reviewed and a total of 2.5 billion rials was placed at the disposal of the Gendarmerie of the Islamic Republic of Iran for extraordinary military operations.

COMMANDERS INTERVIEWED ON RAMADAN OPERATION

LD261954 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Text] According to the commander of the ground forces, despite making use of the Israeli system of deploying troops during the Ramadan Operation, the enemy has lost at least 650 tanks and personnel carriers and has suffered at least 5,000 dead. The fighters of Islam captured 1,159 Iraqi aggressors. During these operations to date, 101 tanks of Saddam's armed forces have been captured, a number of which are the modern T-72 tanks recently delivered to Iraq. Also at least 150 square km of Iraqi territory has been liberated from the occupation of the Ba'thist aggressors.

According to an IRNA report, the commanders of the ground forces and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps today in an interview with the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic, held in the Karbala' headquarters, announcing the above figures said: [read by announcer] The aim of the Ramadan Operation, 3/4 of the first stage of which has been completed, is to destroy Iraqi forces and to cleanse the border regions of the artillery of the Iraqi Armed Forces which started the war against the Islamic revolution 23 months ago. As we are operating inside Iraqi territory, and because of careful observance of Islamic principles, we are forced to try to ensure that Iraqi civilians resident in the region suffer the least amount of damage, loss and casualty. We only fire at the military positions of the wicked enemy. As a result, in comparison with former operations, these operations will be longer, more accurate and will have special requirements. Despite the provocations of the Iraqi regime, which by bombing our residential towns tries to force us to fire at the civilians in that country, we believe we should inflict the least damage on Iraqi cities.

According to the commander of the ground forces, the Islamic Republic's artillery has such volume and strength that in only a few hours it could destroy Basra. However, we do not even fire at military targets near that city, to avoid inflicting damage upon the people of Basra. Our artillery fire is currently aimed at the Shu'aybah military base, 15 km south-west of Basra, and (Bamiyah) refinery.

In this interview, Brother Reza'i, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, emphasized: We have based the policy of the Ramadan Operation on inflicting the greatest amount of losses on the Iraqi military forces, while making sure that no injury or loss is inflicted upon the civilians of that country. Brother Reza'i added: In these operations, which are only in the first stage, losses inflicted upon the military equipment and the war machine of Iraq have been more than those inflicted in the Jerusalem operation; but personnel losses inflicted upon Iraq have been less than the previous operations.

Colonel Sayyad Shirazi, commander of the ground forces, presented accurate figures of the losses inflicted upon the military units of the enemy, which on average constituted 40 percent of its entire military capability, and talked about the capturing of 101 enemy tanks, of 1,159 enemy forces, and the destruction of 650 tanks and personnel carriers.

He added: The height of the Ramadan Operation was achieved in the first stage of the operations; on the eve of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr, in only one area comprising 250 square km inside Iraqi territory, 372 tanks and personnel carriers and 200 Iraqi vehicles were destroyed. We possess documented and accurate evidence concerning this. He added: We are confronting the enemy on a 150-km front from the most southern border area up to near (Hur al-Azim) and we possess more than 150 square km of enemy territory.

Colonel Sayyad Shirazi referred to the Israeli method of deploying troops, which has been imitated by Iraq, and explained: The enemy has positioned its armored units in triangular formations, each side of which is 1-km long, and it is difficult to penetrate them [words indistinct]. However, with God's might and assistance, we will smash them.

Brother Reza'i, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, said in this interview: 800 km of the southern and western borders of our country are depopulated due to enemy [words indistinct] and the incessant artillery fire of its armed forces, and we are dutybound to restore security to our Muslim compatriots. Therefore, due to the necessity of punishing the aggressor, we should crush him so that in the future other people will not contemplate aggression against the Islamic revolution and against our territory.

In addition, the fighters of Islam must be placed at the side of an Islamic government in Iraq for it to be possible for them to reach Jerusalem. Therefore, Iraq should be liberated from the existence of the Ba'thist regime and Saddam should be overthrown.

The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps recommended that the Iraqi officers submit to Islam and refrain from assisting Saddam. He compared their position with that of the Iranian officers in the last year of the monarchical regime in Iran and said: In the same way that the members of the monarchical armed forces repented and returned to the embrace of Islam and that most of them kept their positions up to [word indistinct] level, the Iraqi officers can also refrain from continuing their present path and can turn to the Islamic revolution in their country.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE NO 994

LD261756 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Communique No 994 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. The victorious combatants of Islam continue their battle on all the fronts with most commendable distinction for the honor of dear Islam and for the destruction of the aggressive hireling Iraqi Ba'thists. An account of this is hereby made available for the information of the dear compatriots:

Intense battle and exchange of fire continue with intensity on the southern fronts, particularly in the Ramadan Operation sector. Self-sacrificers of Islam victoriously defend their scattered positions, reinforce them as much as possible and, using heavy-artillery fire, carry out raids and dispatch tank-hunting squads, continuing the battle to weaken as much as possible and eventually destroy the Saddamist forces.

Exchange of fire continued sporadically on the western fronts. In the Meymak and Mehran regions this was heavier. Artillery fire by the combatants of the ground forces on the Saddamist forces' oil and military installations destroyed enemy positions and fortifications, and set oil installations on fire.

In the Abadan sector yesterday, warriors of the gendarmerie and the hireling Iraqi Ba'thists continued to exchange fire. Heavy-artillery fire by the warriors of the gendarmerie neutralized enemy activity on the Al-Faw-Basra axis.

Yesterday the city of Abadan and the surrounding areas again came under the heavy- and long-range weapon fire of the hireling Iraqi Ba'thists. As a result, one of our dear compatriots was martyred and several others were injured. In addition, one house was set on fire by the criminal Saddamists.

At various times yesterday several intruding Iraqi aircraft tried to violate the air-space of a number of southern border towns but, due to tactical actions by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran's defense units, the intruding aircraft of the aggressive Iraqi Armed Forces were forced to flee.

[Signed] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

BUSHEHR ANNOUNCES RED ALERT CONDITIONS 26 JULY

GF261714 Bushehr Domestic Service in Persian 1658 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] This is Bushehr, Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Dear listeners: According to the latest reports, a red alert condition has been declared for Bushehr region. Please make sure that you comply with all the safety regulations for this condition. [sound of siren]

OPERATIONS AGAINST REBELS IN URUMIYEH REPORTED

GF262119 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 12 Jul 82 p 3

[Text] The fighters of Islam, in continuation of purge operations in (Chal Qaran Soru), a district in Urumiyeh, killed or wounded 40 counterrevolutionaries while purging 3 villages of the filth of armed illegal elements. According to the IRNA correspondent in Urumiyeh, quoting the Public Relations Office of the headquarters for western region operations, during the operations the sensitive heights of Sinabad, Farizban and (Kan Nesbi) were captured by the brother army personnel, guards and popular forces and a quantity of documents belonging to the defunct Democratic Party and other illegal organizations fell into the hands of the fighters of Islam.

According to the same report, the village of Tamrin, a district of Salmas, was also purged by the fighters of Islam. During the purge 15 Brno hunting rifles and handguns and a quantity of ammunition were discovered by the fighters of Islam. None of the Islamic zealots were harmed in these operations.

Further Details

GF261359 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 15 Jul 82 p 7

[Excerpts] Urumiyeh, KEYHAN correspondent: More than 80 armed counterrevolutionaries who were members of the defunct Democratic Party, the hypocrites' organization, the monarchists and the feudalists were killed and more than 95 were wounded in the "martyr Beheshti" operations, which were carried out at dawn the day before yesterday with the complete collaboration of the combatants of Islam, comprising the gendarmerie officials, the Guards Corps and the Mobilization, in the heights of the Judeh, (Heni) and (Burudak) villages in Salmas District.

The operation headquarters in the northwest of the country in Urumiyeh District announced the results as follows:

1. Occupation of the base of the defunct Democratic Party in (Burudak).

2. Discovery and seizure of 1 81-mm mortar launcher with 18 cartridges, 1 long-range wireless set, 3 hunting rifles, 1 belt of cartridges, 18 oval grenades, 1,500 G-3 bullets, 500 machinegun bullets, 1 range-finder for mortar launchers, some binoculars and a considerable number of certificates and interorganizational documents.

3. Discovery of the hypocrites' base and numerous interorganizational documents, a jeep and a mortorcycle belonging to the hypocrites.

4. Occupation and destruction of the (Burudak) prison, which belonged to the defunct Democratic Party, and seizure of a tractor which was used to transport the armed members of the party.

5. Complete purge of the population of the villages of Judeh, (Heni) and (Aq Seql), cleansing them of the filth of the existence of the counterrevolutionary elements, the discovery of a considerable quantity of arms, ammunition and documents and the arrest of a large number of counterrevolutionaries during the operations.

In these large-scale operations, which are still in progress, two Islamic combatants were struck by a mine and achieved the lofty status of martyrdom; four others sustained minor injuries.

In similar joint operations which took place at dawn yesterday, the combatants of Islam wiped out the rendezvous of the counterrevolutionaries in (Firenabad) and hideouts in (Susanabad) and (Buzbuzan) in Salmas District were cleansed of the filth of the counterrevolutionary elements.

Another report says that armed unlawful elements and the lackeys affiliated with world oppression stole pharmaceutical equipment from the Bukan dispensary.

The personnel at the bases of Shahid Kaffash and the Azar Mir Kiln area in Mahabad District were embroiled in a clash with the counterrevolutionaries in which they encountered the intense resistance of the brothers of the armed forces. In this clash, which continued for three hours, our forces did not suffer any casualties, but no figures of enemy casualties have been received yet.

ECONOMIC DELEGATION RETURNS FROM TOUR OF PRC

LD260514 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, an Iranian economic delegation to the PRC, led by the deputy agriculture minister, returned to Tehran last night. The purpose of the delegation's tour of China was to expand economic, technical and agricultural relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the PRC.

On its return to Tehran the delegation was met at the airport by the PRC ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The head of the delegation described the outcome of the visit to China as satisfactory and successful and added that the two countries had reached agreement in the fields of agriculture, industry and trade.

STATUS OF JAPANESE PETROCHEMICAL TALKS NOTED

LD261308 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Jul 82

[Text] The technical delegation of the Iranian petrochemical industry, which went to Tokyo last week to hold discussions with the Japanese partners, has returned to Tehran. The outcome of these talks was presented to the deputy oil minister in charge of petrochemical affairs.

The deputy minister of oil in charge of petrochemical affairs told the Central News Unit correspondent: In previous talks, the Japanese partners had clearly undertaken to provide Iran with any technical assistance and cooperation needed to complete the petrochemical project, provided the joint project's financial problems were somehow solved. Now that the Iranian partners have agreed to provide the financial needs of the project, in this round of talks the Japanese partners practically disregarded previously announced [word indistinct] and agreements and did not clearly answer the Iranian delegation's proposal to prepare a timetable for the beginning of preliminary work and the determination of how to execute the project.

He added: In any case, after the technical delegation's negotiations in Tokyo, it was decided that the Japanese partners would review and study the Iranian partners' views and communicate their view during the next week. If these views are accepted by the Iranian National Petrochemical Industry Company [NPIC] the next round of talks will probably be held in Tehran.

Commenting on the future of this project, the deputy minister of oil in charge of petrochemical affairs said: Considering the stance taken by the NPIC, which is determined to complete this huge project speedily and as soon as possible, following the policies and guidelines given by the Islamic Government of Iran, the Japanese partners should clarify their position in light of former agreements and commitments as soon as possible. Otherwise, the NPIC will consider other alternatives for the completion of this project.

On the other hand, during its stay in Japan the NPIC's technical delegation directly negotiated with several engineering and construction contractors on the problems of the project and the possibility of resuming work on the project.

The leader of the delegation said: In these talks, we felt that the contractors were ready to carry out their contractual commitments and the necessary cooperation, and it was impressed upon them that the lack of agreement with the Japanese partners would have a negative effect on contractors' extended participation and use of opportunities to reconstruct and build new petrochemical units in Iran. The Iranian NPIC delegation returned to Tehran last night.

ENERGY MINISTER DETAILS COOPERATION WITH ALGERIA

LD251058 Tehran IRNA in English 0945 GMT 25 Jul 82

[Text] Tehran, July 24, IRNA -- Energy Minister Dr. Hasan Ghafuri-Fard, who accompanied Prime Minister Musavi to Algeria and Libya, in an interview with IRNA said that they organised joint Iranian-Algerian committees to discuss energy and cultural affairs while in Algeria.

In the energy committee they discussed more exploitation of potential hydroelectric, nuclear and experimental energy sources by both Iran and Algeria. The energy minister said that Iran would cooperate with Algeria in making and exporting electrical hardware including cables, transformers, current meters and the like since Iran had an electrical hardware industry.

He added that Iran would in turn benefit from Algeria's experience in the field of unconventional solar energy sources. He also said Algeria wanted to cooperate with Iran in dam construction, the establishment of power stations and high-tension lines.

Iran and Algeria hoped to take basic steps in making their countries self-sufficient by joint cooperation, Ghafuri-Fard added. In the trip Iran invited the Algerian energy minister and Algerian experts to travel to Iran for, he said, the highest priority was the unity, closeness and cooperation between the two friendly Muslim countries.

PETROLEUM MINISTER ON DOMESTIC OIL EXPLOITATION

LD241252 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Jul 82

[Text] Mr Gharazi, minister of petroleum, who was visiting Bakhtaran Province, gave an interview to IRNA in Bakhtaran on the point of his departure, in which he said that during the visit he studied ways of renewed exploitation of the oil wells in Naftshahr region.

He said: By implementing a vast project Khorramabad's oil will be carried to the Bakhtaran oil refinery and it is forecast that this project will be completed by Shahrivar [Iranian month beginning on 23 August]. He added: Arrangements have been made so that Bakhtaran region's oil consumption requirements for 1 and 1/2 months can be stored in that province so that problems would not arise in the winter season; in the meantime, an attempt will be made to use an oil pipeline system for transferring petroleum products instead of using road tankers.

Mr Gharazi also said: At present 600,000 barrels of oil are being refined by our refineries. In order to make up for this shortage our countrymen should economize. The petroleum minister said: There is no shortage from the standpoint of gasoil and we have sufficient quantities of gasoil for consumption by agriculture and transport. With regard to petrol he said: We are more concerned with supplying the needs of those who hold coupons.

BRIEFS

BANK MELLI ASSETS -- Bank Melli Iran announced its debit and credit balances as of April 1981 [as published] as follows: Assets including cash reserves, gold reserves at home and abroad, legal deposits, promissory notes, loans and all kinds of assets amount to 2,149,448,062,504 rials Liabilities stand at 2,149,448,062,504 rials. [Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 15 Jul 82 p 1 GF]